

APPENDIX H

**National Criteria
for 4-H Youth Development
Educational Materials
and
The National 4-H Curriculum Collection**



National Criteria for 4-H Youth Development Educational Materials

Each of the following fourteen criteria is essential for educational materials to be included in the National Collection of 4-H Curricula, recommended for use in every State and Territory. The Criteria are to be used to evaluate materials intended for youth, for volunteers, and for staff. Authors are encouraged to submit materials at the completion of the pilot/review stage, so jury comments can help strengthen the final product. Educational Materials are evaluated against the criteria by a National 4-H Curriculum Jury: A 4 point scale is used.

- 4 = Unquestionably meets criteria
- 3 = meets criteria to a satisfactory degree
- 2 = does not quite meet criteria
- 1 = clearly does not meet criteria

These criteria, created by the National 4-H Curriculum Developmental Committee, modified and piloted by the Youth K-3 (5-8) Task Force, amplified during the '93 Curriculum Staff Pre-conference, and refined by the National 4-H Experiential Learning Design Team, were then condensed and sharpened from 35 to the present 14 in a 3-round Delphi process involving nearly 300 staff from nearly all States and Territories. The Criteria and procedures were revised 10/95, 10/97, 10/99, and will be re-examined annually.

A. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING METHODOLOGY

- 1. The instructional approach of the materials is experiential education. Through vital practice, young people actively learn, then share their experiences, reflect on its importance, connect it to real world examples, and apply the resulting knowledge to other situations.**

Units, Chapters or Sections should be characterized by a “theme” that reflects both the content and the particular life skill set through which the content will be addressed.

Content should be organized along an experiential path. In its simplest form, a single experience is followed by reflection and then application.

A simple five step cycle is also common. Content flows sequentially from one experiential mode to the next: experience; share; process; generalize and apply, all in the course of a single meeting or lesson.

The experiential path may also be more complex, continuing through several weeks of learning before the cycle is completed. The unit might be organized into independent areas of interest, with content flowing back and forth between experience and reflection until all content within an area is addressed. Content could then be collectively generalized and applied in an integrated fashion.

More depth of learning can often be achieved by approaching content with a series of experience and reflection steps which build on each other until the necessary experiential base has been established. The generalization mode may include the introduction of content necessary to bridge from individual experiences to the underlying principles. The apply mode should provide *the actual use* of targeted life skills in a different situation.

- 2. Opportunities are included for involving volunteers and youth as partners in planning, implementing and evaluating the learning process.**

Ways are evident for the leader/teacher to intervene in the learning process; focusing, supporting, providing feedback, debriefing.

- 3. Materials are user friendly, and identify the intended delivery mode(s) for the curriculum.**

e.g. delivery modes or educational settings:
organized clubs, special interest activities/short term programs, day camps, overnight camping programs, individual study/mentoring/family learning programs, school age child care education programs, instructional TV/video, distance education, parent training, adult and teen volunteer training, staff development.

B. LEARNER CENTERED

- 4. The educational materials include a variety of educational experiences for varied learning styles. They build on various knowledge bases and are applicable to real world situations and current societal issues.**

The unit's experientially based activities . . .

- _ fit with the theme
- _ are appropriate for the content being addressed and life skills to be applied
- _ are engaging enough for the learner
- _ are interesting for the learner

The educational materials relate to societal issues which involve or are of concern to a large number of learners of the targeted age group.

- 5. The reading level, subject matter, learning experiences, incentives and recognition are developmentally appropriate for the intended audiences and allow for varying participant experience levels.**

Reading level--the proper choice of words which reflect the appropriate degree of difficulty or simplicity suitable for the targeted audience and subject matter.

Comprehensibility--the ease with which the participant can understand the content because of clarity, tone, style, or organization.

Developmentally appropriate--to how individuals grow and develop by ages and stages: physically, socially, emotionally, mentally and vocationally.

Are there experiences or skills learners must already have had to begin this curriculum? Are ways suggested to make up for any lacking experiences or skills? Are provisions made for additional challenges for those with advanced skills and knowledge? Are opportunities provided for self-pacing by learners?

- 6. The educational materials encourage positive attitudes toward learning by being presented in a fun, appealing, engaging and challenging manner that is consistent with learning theories.**
- 7. The educational materials identify and target one or more outcomes or skills which are highly transferable, broadly useful beyond the subject matter, or throughout life. These may come from any source, such as life skills lists, workforce competencies, science process skills or internal assets, etc.**

- The targeted outcome or skill set is appropriate for the age and skill level of the learners.
- The targeted outcome or skill set is congruent with the content being addressed.
- The targeted outcome or skill set is consistent with the unit's theme.
- The targeted outcome or skill set is applied in a meaningful way.

8. **The educational material is sensitive, reflective and respectful of audience diversity in income, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or family status.**

Stereotypes of race, sex role, etc. must be avoided. Graphics need to show diverse gender, economic, racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Materials may be targeted to meet the special needs of youth, families and communities. The materials may reflect the cultures of the area intended to be a part of the program.

C. SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT

9. **Uses research-based human development methodology and subject matter knowledge from the land grant system, other universities, and/or other sources. Facts and terminology are accurate, current, and used appropriately.**

Vocabulary level--the proper choice of words which reflect the appropriate degree of difficulty or simplicity suitable for the targeted audience and subject matter.

Comprehensibility--the ease with which the participant can understand the content because of clarity, tone, style, or organization.

10. **Subject matter is used as a vehicle through which growth and development of the learner occurs.**

Every effort should be made to show how the concepts and principles which underlie the content can be applied in other settings.

11. **Design, format, and packaging of the educational materials are appropriate to the intended audience, the subject matter, and the media used.**

- Components of the curriculum are clearly integrated.
- Size of print, font, line length, spacing, layout, illustrations, grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary are appropriate.
- Approximate completion time required indicated.
- If illustrations include people, diversity is evident.
- If commercial products, services or trade names are mentioned, the materials must include a disclaimer stating that these are not endorsed to the exclusion of other suitable products or services.
- If the 4-H Emblem is used in a size above 3/4", it includes the statement "Protected Under 18 USC 707."
- Appealing cover illustrations are desirable.
- Tempo (pace) is appropriate to audience and content.
- Design is for interaction rather than passive viewing (hands-on/minds-on).
- Locus of control is appropriate (more learner control as age of audience increases).

- Quality of presentation media is satisfactory.
- Clear instructions are provided for using all materials.

D. OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATION

- 12. Goals, outcomes or objectives are clearly stated. The educational materials appear to be efficient in the time, effort and materials necessary to achieve objectives.**

Specific targeted "intentional learning objectives" are likely to be narrowly limited. "Incidental learning" or unplanned outcomes (not stated or tested) might also teach a lot. Much of the values content is likely to be in the latter category.

Learning activities consistently support the objectives. The curricula should minimize the financial cost necessary to participate.

- 13. Evaluation experiences or tools are suggested or included which provide participants feedback on their accomplishments.**

e.g.: demonstrations, journals, conference judging, project judging, record keeping, skillathons, retrospective post quizzes, impact evaluation tools, application assignments, suggestions for observation of behavior to check on the acquisition of desired knowledge and skills. Ideally, these will include appropriate evaluation strategies in a variety of methods and settings.

- 14. Evidence is provided that participants using this material generally achieve the major objectives.**

Expert Verification _ Supporting documentation reflects a measurable level of usefulness with the intended audience.

Is the material both reliable and valid (Does it consistently do what it says it will do?) Have authors included documentation in the form of formative evaluation results or impact evaluations indicating evidence of effectiveness in obtaining the desired outcomes during usage? Are explanations of the evaluation design and an example of the instrument(s) or procedures included? Is evaluative documentation in a format that is useful to volunteers and staff?

Have the materials been piloted with all the ages and delivery modes for which the materials are being recommended? How many participants were in each pilot? What were the ages and demographics of the participants? How many states were involved in the pilot? How many regions?

Experiential Learning Design Team -Aug. 1999

THE NATIONAL 4-H CURRICULUM REVIEW PROCESS

Cooperative Extension System staff who are experts in one or more of the following fields make up the Jury Pool: curriculum design; youth development research; learning theory; experiential learning; teaching; program management; non-formal education; working with volunteers; and life skills. Every effort is made to assure that the members of the Jury Pool are a demographically diverse group, including diversity in age, sex, ethnic background, and geography. Terms of service in the jury pool are three years. New members are solicited annually, through State 4-H Leaders. To be considered as a member of the Jury Pool, a staff member must have ready access to e-mail. They may come from county, district or state staffs.

Working Juries of five members and a chair work concurrently. Each concentrates its efforts on one general category of 4-H curricula. The categories correspond to major 4-H curriculum enrollment reporting categories. Members of the Jury Pool are assigned to particular Working Juries, based on their interest or experience in the particular program area, life skill initiative, or age group. The Chair of each Working Jury coordinate e-mail discussions of items being reviewed, and consolidates consensus on decisions on curriculum selection.

A Jury Coordinator at CSREES-USDA receives items submitted for review at any time, sorts and assigns them to working juries, instructs juries on the national criteria for youth development curriculum, how the criteria are to be applied, and the review process itself. The Jury Coordinator also handles the processes--manages the information flow, answers the technical questions, and maintains the speed and efficiency necessary for the system to accomplish its purposes.

On completion of the review of a particular curriculum, Jury Chairs transmit electronically to the Jury Coordinator the numerical ratings of that curriculum against each of the 14 National Criteria, together with each jurists' comments on each of the 14 criteria, and whether the curriculum is or is not accepted into the National Collection of 4-H Curricula.

The Jury Coordinator then sends complete results of the review back to the developer of the curriculum. The average composite numerical rating of the working jury on each criteria determines the final recommendation:

1. ACCEPTED INTO THE NATIONAL COLLECTION

An average of 3.0 points or higher for each of the 14 criteria (a minimum of 42 total points) must be received. This curriculum product will be recommended for nationwide use as it stands. It is eligible to display the Reviewed and Recommended National Collection logo and be accepted as part of the National Collection. It will remain in the National Collection for a period of five years from the date of publication. At that time it will be eligible to be resubmitted by the authors for jury review.

2. NOT ACCEPTED INTO THE NATIONAL COLLECTION

One or more Criteria scored an average of 2.0 or less (does not quite meet Criteria) **OR** Less than an average of 3.0 points for each of the 14 criteria were received (41 or fewer total points). This curriculum product may be resubmitted to the jury process after concerns expressed by the jury have been appropriately addressed.

THE NATIONAL COLLECTION OF JURIED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CURRICULA

For curricula accepted into the National Collection, the Jury Coordinator prepares Citations, in both electronic and written formats. Written citations are used in connection with displays and exhibits.

REVISED CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES 08/99

MATERIALS THAT MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL COLLECTION

The National 4-H curriculum Collection includes curricula which have met each of the 14 specific criteria. Different types of curricula are used for different audiences, delivery modes, and purposes — and may be in print, audio-visual, or electronic forms. The medium and format to be used for a given curriculum is based on the curriculum content and outcomes sought, as well as the needs of the target audience.

Below are descriptions of the two types of curricula used by 4-H that are accepted into the National 4-H Curriculum Collection, and how each are evaluated. As described, these provide maximum flexibility and creativity in format, graphics, length, delivery methods, and depth of subject to be covered. In general, such materials will be very comprehensive and allow for a sequential, complete learning experience.

Leader/Teacher/Helper Guide - for 4-H Club leaders, school teachers, school age child care (SACC) staff, camp counselors, group leaders to teach, lead, and guide program participants in an experiential learning process. Evaluated using all 14 national 4-H curriculum review criteria.

Member/Participant Guide - for 4-H Club members, students, campers, after-school program participants to organize and guide themselves through an experiential learning process, often with the help of an adult leader or helper. Evaluated using all 14 national 4-H curriculum criteria.

OTHER 4-H PUBLICATIONS AND MATERIALS

Besides the above, there are other types of educational materials that are of great benefit in youth development programming. However, they are not complete “packaged” learning experiences that can meet all 14 of the Curriculum Criteria. Often these materials are complementary, supplementary, or adjunct to curricula. They are not reviewed by the national jury system, or accepted for inclusion in the National Collection as such. However, states should consider using certain of the national criteria in their own development and review processes:

Youth Project Record - Provides program participants a means of documenting the learning process. Often, record-keeping is integrated into Member/Participant Guides. In the cases where Project Records are self-standing, they probably should include the following components:

Goals for the project

A record of participation in activities and learning experiences, including leadership, public speaking, and community service
Learning outcomes
Plan for applying knowledge learned
Financial records/inventory
Project-specific information

Reference Materials and Teaching Aids - Reference materials often supplement the main curriculum. If they are in printed form, such as a booklet, they might include more details and factual information. Many states routinely use Extension reference materials created primarily for adult audiences as references in 4-H. Often, reference materials in audio-visual format (for instance, videotape) provide a demonstration of the activities and information contained in Leader and Member Guides. There are also maps, models, posters, diagrams and Web sites used as teaching aids. Recommended national criteria for review: 5, 8, 9, 11

Fact Sheet or Guidesheet - A simple, often one-page, information sheet on a single topic. Typically subject matter oriented, as a supplement for learning, or an update to a more comprehensive curriculum. Recommended national criteria for review: 5, 8, 9, 11.

Promotional Materials - Brochures, flyers, videotapes, and other means are important tools used to promote 4-H to potential 4-H members, partners, parents and families, and legislators. Recommended national criteria for review: 5, 8, 9, 11.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE YOUR MATERIALS INCLUDED AS PART OF THE NATIONAL COLLECTION?

Those who submit curricula for juried review in hopes of having them included in the national collection make a commitment that if the materials are accepted, they will continue to make those curricula available for sale on demand (or otherwise available) for a period of five years. Five years after the materials have been accepted into the collection, materials will be removed from the listing of the collection unless the materials once more go through the review process. This is done to assure that all items in the national collection continue to be up-to-date, accurate, and appropriate for use by the target audience(s).

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE EIGHT COPIES OF MATERIALS SENT IN FOR JURIED REVIEW?

The jurors in the national 4-H curriculum review process volunteer their time to do this important work. Their only remuneration is getting to keep the copies of materials they review! One copy of the materials is kept in the National 4-H Headquarters for use in displays and exhibits. If materials are so expensive that this presents a problem, those submitting materials for review must provide pre-paid mailers which fit their materials for each of the six jury members.

CAN I SUBMIT MATERIALS FOR REVIEW IN PRE-PRESS DRAFT FORM?

The ideal situation is to submit materials for review in the form in which they were piloted, before major investments have been made in final layout and art. Then suggestions from the jury can help strengthen and improve the materials at little cost. Jury comments made pertain to the version they review. If significant changes are then made in the final product before it goes to press, eight copies of the final version should be sent in, so that the jury comments can be updated, and the recommendation in the citation made stronger.

APPLICATION FOR JURIED 4-H REVIEW OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM

While not absolutely required, the preferred method for review is for the jury to consider a complete series of closely-related materials as a package, including those designed for use by the learners, (including the full range of developmental levels available) as well as those related materials intended for use by volunteer leaders and staff. Materials may include written, video, computer and other curriculum products. Include pilot/formative and or impact evaluation of the product(s) submitted. The information on this form will be available electronically nationwide for curriculum products accepted into the National 4-H Curriculum Collection.

Curriculum Title: _____

Design Team Contact or Author: _____

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Title: _____

Organization: _____

Phone: _____ FAX: _____ Internet: _____

Address: _____

ABSTRACT: (One paragraph description (include purpose, content description, teaching strategies, evaluation strategies, etc.) (Append to this form)

LIFE SKILL AREAS: (Check those that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding self | <input type="checkbox"/> Communicating and relating with others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving and decision-making | <input type="checkbox"/> Acquiring, analyzing and using information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Managing resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Preparedness | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychomotor skills |

PROGRAM AREAS: (Check those that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and civic education | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication and expressive arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumerism and Family Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and Earth Sciences |

☐ Healthy Life Style ☐ Personal Development
☐ Plants and Animals ☐ Science and Technology

COMPONENTS (Check all those that apply)

☐ Learner Manual ☐ Leader Manual ☐ Activity Sheet(s) ☐ Audio Tape
☐ Parent Book ☐ Leader Training ☐ Fact Sheet(s) ☐ Videotape
☐ Computer Program ☐ Formative and Impact Evaluation Results (**Required** -criteria 14)
☐ Evaluation experiences to provide participants feedback on their accomplishments (criteria 13)
☐ Other (specify): _____

SPECIAL TARGET AUDIENCE (indicate all for which curriculum is appropriate):

Academic range(s): _____

Language/Culture(s): _____

Gender: _____

Special Needs: _____

APPROPRIATE DELIVERY MODES: (Check those that apply):

☐ Organized 4-H Clubs ☐ Special Interest/Short Term/Day Camps
☐ Overnight Camping Programs ☐ School Enrichment Programs
☐ Individual Study/Mentoring/Family ☐ School Age Child Care Education
☐ Instructional TV/Video ☐ Volunteer/Staff Development
☐ Other (specify) _____

ACCESS INFORMATION

Sponsoring Agency: _____

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Date of Publication: _____

Copyright Held By: _____

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(By submitting items for review, those submitting curricula affirm that the curricula will continue to be made available in some form for five years following acceptance into the National Collection. If none will be made available to prospective purchasers, the curricula will not be accepted into the national collection)

Format(s) Available: ☐ Print ☐ Videotape ☐ CD ROM ☐ Audiotape ☐ Slides ☐ Electronic

Available From: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ FAX: _____ Internet: _____

Send the completed form, with EIGHT COPIES OF THE CURRICULUM MATERIAL TO BE REVIEWED, AND EIGHT COPIES OF EVALUATION RESULTS TO: Postal address: Dr. Allan Smith, Stop 2225, USDA/CSREES, 1400 Independence, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-2225 – or – Shipping address: Dr. Allan Smith, USDA/CSREES, 800 9th Street SW, Waterfront Center, Washington DC 20024.